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which follows it. This is an artificial flower bouquet, a pale copy of the old, familiar custom, but it tries with much good will to create at least the illusion of the real thing for the joy of people who live in the great town. On seeing it people from the country-side at least dwell on the memories of their childhood.

The richest, brightest and gayest «szüret» customs prevailed in the districts in which the wine harvest was the best and richest. The first of these is the district of Tokaj and in it the little town of Mád, which is a famous place for grape ceremonies. The entertainments of its gentry are worthy of a novelist's pen. The dances of its coopers and agricultural labourers preserved a whole list of ancient Hungarian customs. Speaking of Carnival, let us mention a few.

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If wine is the favourite national drink of the Hungarians, it is necessary for it to appear in proper attire. The things with which wine is clothed, are: a stone bottle, a flask or a noggin. The noggin can be a decoration on a table, a nice partner on a journey, a dear lover always kissed with joy! The person who knocks it out of our hands shall be cursed! Terrifying, fearful words are usually written on the flask, to cut short all kinds of evil thoughts. For instance:

To the person desiring to steal this flask,
I wish that he shall become so grand,
That he shall push wheel-barrows in Buda or Pest,
And become the captain of the beggars!

But if we approach the beloved flask without evil thoughts, it speaks to us as Hungarian men usually address their guests:

This bottle, made of clay, belongs to Simon Kiss,
From this he offers a drink to many of his friends.
Take a nice, long draught from it,
A bad road does not matter to a good horse!

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789 Sometimes the friendly appeal and the threat of consequences in case of unrightous behaviour follow each other in the lines of a verse :

If you have a drink from it,
May it become you well ;
If you steal my flask,
May you break your neck.

Some of the flasks are made in the shape of a cross or prayer book. A squat, earthenware «book» explains its origin in the following line :

This is the daily devotion of Joseph Papdi.

This kind of pagan epigram sounds very much like blasphemy. But if we ask the profane Hungarian carefully whether he is not ashamed of the horrible words with which in his bitterness he curses heaven and earth, he reassures us with absolute conviction :

— «It does not go to the same place as our prayers !»

Superstitions of Saint Lucia's day

796 December the 13th, Saint Lucia's day, is the day popularly dedicated to a whole collection of superstitions. It is 12 days before Christmas, and thus precedes the feast by the same number of days as Christmas in the Gregorian Calendar precedes the Christmas of the ancient calendar. The popular name of this space of time is Saint Lucia's calendar, and the majority of the customs and superstitions of the winter solstice have crowded together on this one day, as the witches do on Sylvester's night on Saint Gregory's hill in Buda ...

754 Speaking of witches, we should like to add that it is
789 just on this unfortunate 13th, Saint Lucia's day, that we can, if we wish, see witches face to face ... If anyone